

# Last Ditch Effort Launched to Preserve Historic Tabernacle



**IN THE LIMELIGHT**— Wasatch's historic stake tabernacle once again came into the limelight as efforts are made to preserve the structure as a historical landmark in our local community.

Widespread attention began to be focused upon Heber Valley last week as revealed at a meeting conducted by the Save the Tabernacle Committee at the Memorial Building on Monday, May 31st.

The meeting was presided over by Don Barker, chairman of the committee. This meeting was the third in a series of meetings conducted following the release of news on May 22 that plans to raze the Tabernacle were going ahead.

**AFTER MEETING WITH** the First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to determine if the decision to raze the Tabernacle was irrevocable, the Committee was assured that the Church did not desire to destroy the historic structure if sufficient support could be found to meet specified conditions of financial and cultural development for its future. With this in mind, two meetings were held in Salt Lake City at the State Historical Society Offices where support was organized for citizens of Heber.

**THE MEETING IN HEBER** was a presentation of this program to the people of Heber to kick off a final campaign for support and let the people of the valley know that the structure can still be saved.

Speakers at the meeting included many supporters from Salt Lake City and Provo as well as elsewhere in the State. Dr. Joseph L. Hatch of Salt Lake assured the people in the valley that many drama and art interests in the state are interested in utilizing the building for cultural presentations. Mr. Ferrin Whitaker reinforced Dr. Hatch's comments in the art field, and noted art critic George Dibble sent a message through Dr.

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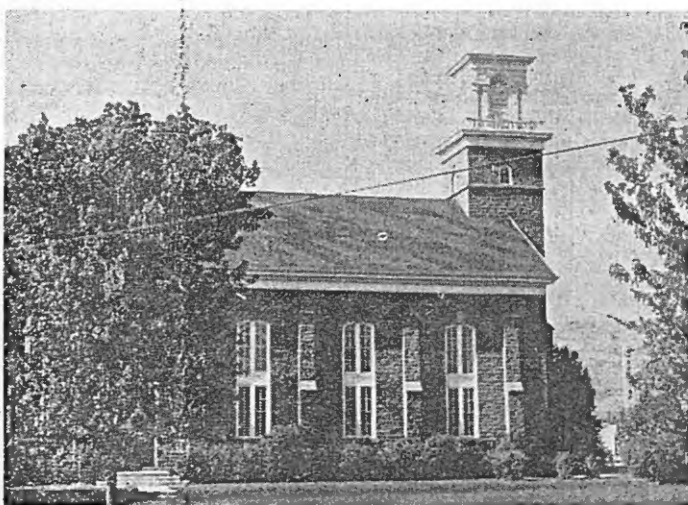
Stan Russon, Everett Cooley, director of the State Historical Society and Theron Luke all pointed out an important asset of the Tabernacle. They said that people would flock from many locales throughout the state and even outside the state to dramas, music, art, presented in the original, unique, historic pioneer architecture represented by the Heber Tabernacle which is almost unattainable elsewhere in the U. S. Boyd Hatch, editor of the Instructor, reinforced this point by stating that there were only two other comparable structures in the United States.

**MRS. RODELLO HICKEN** Hunter said that her book on Heber Valley was just being released and that Reader's Digest condensed books would release it in July and the Reader's Digest carry an article on Heber in the August issue. Prominent in the front of the book is a picture of the Tabernacle and as part of the publicity of the book she was planning on releasing a picture of her standing in front of the historic and beautiful building. She decried the contemplated destruction of the structure.

The Director of the Utah State Parks Commission and the Director of the Utah Publicity Council, both stated that preserving the Tabernacle could materially benefit the planned Wasatch Stake Park development in Heber Valley and be a strong attraction to draw tourists to Heber City with the development of its potential.

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**MR. STAN RUSSON**, A member of the MIA General Board, prominent for many years in drama circles in the state also sent a message to the people enthusiastically presenting the potential of using the Tabernacle in high class legitimate stage presentations.

A member of the Tabernacle Choir who had taken an interest in the music potential of the Tabernacle stated that he had a list of 35 musical groups interested in using the building.

**AN EXAMPLE OF THE** enthusiastic response that he got was the statement by Mr. Nibley, Concertmaster of the Utah Valley Symphony Orchestra that "We would book an engagement now if you were ready." A representative of the Music Department at the BYU rose to his feet to spontaneously pledge support from his chamber

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The Director of the Utah Parks Commission and the Director of the Utah Publicity Commission both stated that preservation of the Tabernacle could make a big fit the planned Wasatch-Cache National Park development in Heber and be a strong attraction for tourists to Heber City and development of its potential.

**DR. EVERETT L. COOPER**, director of the State Historical Society, sent a message to the public stating: "The Utah Historical Society is charged with the preservation of historic buildings. It is this responsibility which was brought to the Utah Historical Society into the state to save the Wasatch Tabernacle. In taking this action the Society is following the criteria established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the only organization chartered by Congress to preserve national historic shrines. The criteria are: (1) Is the site intimately associated with the history or development of the area; (2) Have historic events transpired there; (3) Is it unique; (4) Is it associated with the lives of historical figures; and (5) Is it practical and feasible to preserve the building—and so on every count the Tabernacle qualifies as a historic building worthy of preservation.

Future fund-raising and development activities are being planned by the Committee. The plan is to have an activity each Wednesday evening in Heber through the summer months sponsored by the committee.



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Future fund-raising and development activities are being planned by the Committee. There will be an activity each Wednesday evening in Heber through June sponsored by the committee.



Since we dropped the atomic bombs on two cities in Japan during World War II and got peace and good friends in Japan, let us drop nuclear bombs on Hanoi and get peace and make friends in Viet Nam. Too, it might be a good idea to make friends in Red China by dropping nuclear bombs on Peking.

A few baby nuclear bombs could be kept on hand for the local riots, such as took place in Los Angeles, Chicago and other places. I am sure that a few baby nuclear bombs, well placed, would make all black people friends of the United States.

E. E. GENTRY

### Old Times Recalled

Editor, Tribune: I was born in Salt Lake City in 1887. My father, Charles W. Carter, was Salt Lake City's first photographer, taking exclusive pictures of the temple each year of its construction. My mother was born in a pioneer push cart on a trip across the plains (Later the cart was remodeled into a kitchen table.) I was in the electric business in Salt Lake several years before expanding into a fixture factory and a set of chain stores in Detroit, where I now live.

I am still much interested in the city that gave me birth and I admire its people. It seems that your excellent publication should conduct a crusade to take advantage of the

## Senator Fr

By Har

Too high an appreciation of our talents is the chief cause why experience preaches to us all in vain.—Colton.

### Bouquets and a Brickbat

It was late Thursday afternoon when I finally completed my column for Saturday. I'd had many interruptions, and I was tired and very depressed. And while the thought of food nauseated me, I knew I had to eat so I prepared and ate my dinner.

At about 9 Ham Park p.m., when I was reading one of the whodunits my neighbor Mrs. Keyser had loaned me, the door buzzer sounded. I wondered who was calling at such a late hour? But it wasn't a caller, it was the mail in my file at The Tribune that someone over there had sent over to me. There were several letters—one from a daughter of Capt. John J. Roberts who now lives in San Diego, Calif., thanking me for my recent article about him, and enclosing a snapshot taken of him by Albert Friedel near their home 64 years ago.

There also were two wonderfully encouraging letters, one from Mrs. L. D. Brown, Lark, Utah, and the other from Mrs. Mark L. Lewis, Spanish Fork. Believe it or not, but just before I had received them I had been thinking of writing an obituary for



# Heber Tabernacle

By JAN PADFIELD

Deseret News Staff Writer

HEBER CITY—Wasatch Stake Tabernacle will continue to dominate the landscape of Heber Valley—with a new owner, the people of Heber City.

Title of the tabernacle and surrounding grounds will be deeded by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to Heber City, with the restriction that activities and uses comply with Church standards, said Wilford W. Kirton Jr., attorney, general counsel for the Church.

Money received by the Church for the tabernacle will be used toward purchase of a \$60,000 site

for a new combined ward-stake center.

Part of the funds for the site were collected in a volunteer drive to save the 80-year-old landmark from demolition squads.

It was proposed the Church lease the tabernacle and grounds to the city. But Mayor Raymond N. Jiacoletti said city council members did not favor that plan.

The city will use the area as a municipal park. The building, to be maintained by the newly organized Wasatch Historical Society, will be a cultural center.

Fund-raising plans are under way by the historical society to raise \$14,000 in the next month

to help defray site acquisition and building restoration and maintenance costs.

Dora Flack, Bountiful, will give a benefit performance in the building at 8:15 p.m. Friday, July 30, when she reviews Rodolfo Hunter's new book, "A House of Many Rooms, a novel about the Heber Valley.

Directed by Kent Larsen, chairman of the tabernacle program committee, a local dramatic group will present the play, "Arsenic and Old Lace," in the building in mid-August.

Other cultural events, both professional and amateur, will be scheduled on a regular basis, said Don Barker, chairman of the Wasatch Historical Society.



## SCENE TODAY

# Heber Hall Is SAVED

By TED CANNON

As you've probably noticed in the news columns, the historic Wasatch Stake Tabernacle in Heber City has been saved from its earlier intended fate of demolition in the path of progress.

Title to the beautiful pioneer structure has now passed to the city of Heber which will work on its renovation, rehabilitation and future use in cooperation with the newly formed Wasatch Historical Society.

And herewith a resounding Cannon Salute to all those who labored so long and diligently to preserve the ancient structure. . . . We hesitate to start naming names for fear of omitting someone, but will mention as prominent in the movement the officers of the new society, Don Barker, president; Guy McDonald, vice president; Barbara McDonald, secretary, and Ruth Witt, treasurer.

And in addition to these, Garn Hatch who really spearheaded the drive, along with Dr. William Jordan, Dr. Joseph Hatch, and many, many others.

And may it be pointed out here that the job is far from finished. A considerable amount of money was needed to save the building. Much has been contributed, more has been pledged. But there are obligations to be met, and donations to the cause are still most acceptable. Send them along to the First Security Bank at Heber, care of the Wasatch Historical Society.

A number of special fund-raising events have already been held in the building, and now that the ownership business is finally settled, more are planned.

Meanwhile, if you're ever up that way, drive by and have a look at the place. Long a monument to pioneer thrift, craftsmanship and cooperation, it can now be regarded also as a monument to modern-day community spirit and dedication to a worthy cause.